

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
IN SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 4265
BY KEVIN STOTTS, PRESIDENT, TALENT 2025
APRIL 23, 2015

GOOD MORNING. MY NAME IS KEVIN STOTTS, THE PRESIDENT OF TALENT 2025. TALENT 2025 IS A COALITION OF OVER 80 WEST MICHIGAN CEOS WHO ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TALENT THROUGHOUT THE WEST MICHIGAN REGION.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU TODAY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 4256.

AS I JUST MENTIONED, TALENT 2025 IS A COALITION OF PRESIDENTS AND CEOS WHO ARE WORKING WITH EDUCATION, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADERS TO CATALYZE AN INTEGRATED TALENT SYSTEM. OUR VISION IS TO ACHIEVE THE STATUS OF A TOP-20 REGION GLOBALLY BY THE YEAR 2025.

TALENT 2025'S CEOS CONVENE STAKEHOLDERS AND FACILITATE COLLABORATIVE WORKING GROUPS TO ENSURE WEST MICHIGAN IS DOING THE VERY BEST TO DEVELOP, ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT. THESE WORKING GROUPS ILLUMINATE PERFORMANCE GAPS, EVALUATE SOLUTIONS, AND ADVOCATE FOR LEADING PRACTICES. THESE LEADING PRACTICES CAN INCLUDE PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES, INVESTMENT BY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS AND POLICY.

I AM HERE TO SPEAK IN FAVOR OF ELIMINATING FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACT REQUIREMENTS THAT LOCAL UNITS PROPOSED FOR ANNEXATION BE CONTIGUOUS TO THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT.

THE NEED FOR A POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, EITHER A TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE, TWO-YEAR, FOUR-YEAR, OR ADVANCED DEGREE HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER. RESEARCH FROM THE UPJOHN INSTITUTE FORECASTS 65% OF WEST MICHIGAN'S WORKFORCE WILL NEED ONE OR MORE OF THESE CREDENTIALS BY 2025. TODAY, WE ARE AROUND 55%.

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, GOVERNOR SNYDER AND LEADERS IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE HAVE PLACED A RENEWED EMPHASIS ON CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION. THIS IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE IN MICHIGAN AND ITS FUTURE ECONOMIC SUCCESS.

THE TALENT NEEDS OF OTTAWA COUNTY IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW IMPORTANT CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION IS FOR WEST MICHIGAN AND WHY THIS CHANGE WILL HELP THE STATE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES DEVELOP THE TALENT EMPLOYERS NEED TODAY.